

on a marble throne with foot extended to be kissed by devotees as they pass in or out of the church. This is what is called kissing the Pope's toe, and some of the guide books tell us that the foot is nearly worn away by this kissing. Well, I examined the foot with some care, and I have no hesitation in saying that if in the future it is only subject to the same wear and tear as in the past, it is good for at least a hundred thousand years. The toes are smoother on the extended foot, and it is just a question with me whether the position of the foot did not require a greater smoothness at the first.

I am sorry that I had no opportunity of witnessing here such a grand service as the Roman Catholic Church can give us; but at present the Pope by some fiction of the imagination holds himself a prisoner in the Vatican, and until he chooses to call himself free there will be no great or grand service in St. Peter's. This was a grievous disappointment to me, for I had looked forward to a grand service on Sunday, and the pettiest little village church in Canada could have given me a service more impressive. There was a marked want of reverence on the part of the singers as they responded in the solemn service of the mass, and the few hundreds of people present seemed to be lost in the immensity of the place. I went to the church intending to see nothing but devotion in the most ancient form of religion, and I came away convinced that the form only was observed, and then only as a matter of routine that had to be got through for the benefit of the few spectators present.

The Vatican adjoins St. Peter's, and as you go down the great square a door to the left gives you entrance by a noble marble stairway to that home of the popes. I shall not attempt to describe what is really a little town in itself. If, as it is asserted, there are eleven thousand rooms and corridors in the Vatican, you will be thankful that I don't even attempt to name them. I shall simply detain you a moment to say that the Sistine Chapel is under this roof, and that in this chapel the cardinals are walled up when engaged in the election of a new pope. Here, also, covering the whole end of the chapel, is Michael Angelo's picture of the Last Judgment. Writers who have not been to Rome get a little mixed with reference to this picture. I heard a speaker at a missionary meeting not long ago give a glowing description of it, but he had it in the dome of St. Peter's; and he gave the painter's name as Raphael, which was scarcely complimentary to Raphael, while it was doing an injustice to Michael Angelo.

I must carry you without ceremony right across the city to the Church of St. John's Lateran, if it be only to see the stair never ascended but on bended knee,—the stair up which Luther was toiling in prayer when that strange voice whispered in his ear "The just shall live by Faith;" and which whisper or inspiration became the keystone of the Protestant religion. The stair is a flight of twenty-eight marble steps, taken from Pilate's Palace at Jerusalem, and was brought to Rome, says tradition, by the Empress Helena. The steps are completely covered by oaken boards, worn smooth by the knees of the faithful. There are openings at intervals to allow the marble to be kissed. Devotees ascending these stairs on bended knee, can descend on foot an adjoining stair on either hand. In front of this church there stands an obelisk of red granite, weighing some six hundred tons. It was brought from Egypt sixteen hundred years ago, and is supposed to have been some thousands of years old then. So the traveller in passing can touch a column under whose shadow it may be Abraham rested when journeying into Egypt.

Turning south from this church and leaving the city by the San Sebastian gate, we enter the famous Appian Way, made by Appius Claudius three hundred years before Christ; and after a short time we tread upon the very stones that were trodden by St. Paul as he made his way from the Three Taverns towards the city to lay his appeal before Cæsar.

On the left of this way, just before we reach the Catacombs of St. Calixtus, is a small church, called "Domine quo vadis," in the centre of which there is a marble block, having the imprint of the Saviour's feet upon it, at least so say the monks. The legend they give you says that St. Peter, escaping from the city on account of persecution, meeting there the Saviour, said "Domine quo vadis," which, being interpreted, means "Lord, whither goest Thou?" The Saviour,